

# Fruits and Veggies Across the Curriculum

## Background, resources and activities for teaching children and youth



*Diets rich in fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of some types of cancer and other chronic diseases.*

### Background

The National Fruit and Vegetable Alliance (formerly the National 5 A Day for Better Health Program) promotes a simple, positive message – eat more fruits and veggies at every meal and snack. The Alliance’s strength comes from the combined efforts and resources of its members. They include:

- American Cancer Society
- American Diabetes Association
- American Heart Association
- California Department of Health Services
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Culinary Institute of America
- National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity
- National Cancer Institute
- National Council of Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Coordinators
- Produce for Better Health Foundation
- Produce Marketing Association
- United Fresh Produce Association
- United States Department of Agriculture



### Inside . . .

Frequently Asked Questions.....	2
Start a Fruit and Veggie Team .....	2
Recipes .....	2
Info Online .....	2
Quantity Recipe Cookbook .....	2
Activity Ideas .....	3

### Health Benefits

Eating more fruits and veggies helps you stay healthy. Fruits and veggies help maintain a healthy weight when they replace high fat foods. And, fruits and vegetables help reduce your risk for:

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Type 2 diabetes
- Some cancers

### Recommendations

Eating lots of fruits and veggies every day is a key element of MyPyramid.gov which represents the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005*. **The amount for each school-age child varies by age, sex, and activity level. The ranges are:**

- ▶ For boys, 2½ to 6½ cups per day
- ▶ For girls, 2½ to 5 cups per day
- ▶ For recommendations for your child, call the Fruit and Vegetable Program for a free copy of *Three simple steps to eating more fruits and vegetables* or visit [www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov).

Because too much fruit juice may lead to tooth decay and overweight, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends limiting fruit juice intake to:

- ▶ 4 -6 ounces per day for 1-6 year olds
- ▶ 8-12 ounces per day for 7-18 year olds

### Fact Sheet for Parents

*“More Peas, Please!”*, a ready-to-copy fact sheet, provides parents of young children with ideas and recipes to help kids eat more fruits and veggies. It is now available in Spanish or English. Request a copy by phone or send an e-mail to [fruitsandveggies@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:fruitsandveggies@dhhs.state.nh.us).

### Lending Library

Teaching materials in the DPHS Lending Library can enhance your programming. Items range from music CDs to videos to curricula with recipes, handouts, and activity ideas. Here’s a sampling:

- *Color Way Creative Pockets Kit*
- *Color Way Game*
- *Fruit and Veggie Recall* (game)
- ▶ Materials can be delivered to your local NH public library.
- ▶ Call the program at 271-4830 for a **list of the audio-visual and print materials** in the collection.
- ▶ To **reserve or borrow** materials, call the DPHS Lending Library directly at 603-271-0562 or 603-271-7060.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What Are the Key Messages?

- Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables at every meal.
- Make fruits and veggies your first choice for snacks.
- Every step taken toward eating more fruits and veggies matters. Even the smallest effort to eat more makes a difference.

## What Does a Tennis Ball Have to Do with Fruits and Vegetables?

Answer: 1 cup of fruit or vegetable is the same size as a tennis ball. Here are a few examples.

- Apple: 1 small
- Banana: 1 large
- Broccoli: 3 5-inch spears
- Carrots: 2 medium
- Grapefruit: 1 medium
- Peach: 1 large
- Potato: 1 medium



### Leafy vegetables

- Raw spinach, kale, collards, mustard greens, and lettuce are leafy vegetables.
- Because they have a lot of space between the leaves, 1 cup of raw leafy vegetables counts as ½ cup.
- ½ cup cooked leafy vegetables counts as ½ cup of your daily intake.

### Dried fruit

- Raisins are dried grapes. Prunes are dried plums. Other dried fruits include apricots, dates and dried apples, mango and pineapple.
  - As fruit dries, it gets smaller. For that reason, ¼ cup dried fruit counts as ½ cup.
- Call for a free copy of *What Does a Tennis Ball Have to Do with Fruits and Vegetables?*

## What Counts?

All forms of fruits and veggies matter:

- Fresh
- Frozen
- Canned
- Dried
- 100 percent juices



Beans count, too! That includes beans in:

- Salads
- Soups and chili
- Burritos
- Dips and hummus

## Start a Fruit and Veggie Team

Working with a team increases creativity and strengthens outcomes. Ask others to join your Fruit and Veggie Team to help you plan fruit and vegetable promotions at your school.

- Teachers (see departments on pages 3-4)
- School nurse/health educator
- School food service director / personnel
- UNH Cooperative Extension
- Parents, grandparents, PTO, PTA
- Community dietitians – try the hospital's outpatient clinic or community education department
- Public librarian and school librarian
- Children's clubs like 4-H and scouts
- College students from the nutrition, dietetics, family and consumer science, nursing, and education departments

## Fruit and Veggie Recipe Criteria

Recipes promoted with the Fruit and Vegetable Program contribute at least ½ cup of fruit or vegetable per 250 calories. And, they are a good source of fiber and low in:

- Added sweeteners (including jams, jellies, and concentrated fruit juice sweeteners)
- Fat
- Saturated fat
- Trans fat
- Sodium

For details, contact the program at 603-271-4830.

## Recipes and Tips Online

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov)

Produce for Better Health Foundation

[www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org)

[www.pbhfoundation.org](http://www.pbhfoundation.org)

## Quantity Recipe Cookbook

Here's a great resource to share with your school food service. All 40 fruit and vegetable based recipes conform to USDA

recipe format. Each recipe serves 25-100.

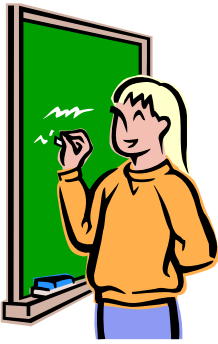
Download a copy today at

[www.dhhs.nh.gov/DHHS/NHP/fruitsandveggies](http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/DHHS/NHP/fruitsandveggies).

The cookbook will be updated to meet the new recipe criteria by Jan 2009.



# Activity Ideas



## Arithmetic

- Calculate the nutrients per serving (vitamin A, vitamin C, fiber, etc.); price per serving.
- How much time do you save by microwaving instead of baking one potato? two potatoes?
- Find fruits and vegetables for one day that add up to the daily recommendation for vitamins A and C, and fiber.

## Consumer Skills

- Design a food label for a fresh fruit or vegetable. Include a Nutrition Facts panel, an ingredient list, and cooking instructions.
- Compare fresh, instant, frozen, and canned potatoes for grams of fat and cost per serving. Compare chips and fries, too.
- Which is the better buy – fresh, canned, or frozen corn? Use labels, empty containers, store flyers, and cash register tapes for current prices.
- Hold a “blind” taste test of canned fruits. Can students distinguish the name-brand from the store brand?
- What are good menu choices for a picnic? Can fruits and vegetables spoil?
- ▶ Ask a grocery to host a class visit. Challenge students to find out how many departments offer fruits and veggies. Look for fresh, canned, frozen and juiced items. Try this resource: [www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/cdic/cpns/retail/retail\\_promAct.htm](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/cdic/cpns/retail/retail_promAct.htm). And, try the PBH **Supermarket Scavenger Hunt** at [www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page\\_id=6](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page_id=6)
- ▶ Borrow the educationally enhanced edition of **Supersize Me!** from the Lending Library (page 1).



## Cooking

- Host a taste test.
- Ask local gardeners to donate samples.
- Ask school food service staff to demonstrate their equipment.
- Try a recipe from another country.
- Offer a “24 Karat Luncheon” with carrot sticks, carrot soup, and carrot cake.
- Demonstrate a fruit and veggie recipe with older students as the presenters.

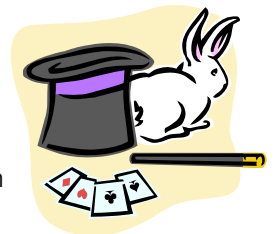
## History, Geography and Culture

- What produce do we eat that was unknown to 15<sup>th</sup> century Europeans? What produce was found in the Americas? Africa? Asia?
- Where do fruits and vegetables grow? What climate features are critical? (Seed catalogs are a good resource.) What inventions made it possible to transport produce?
- Use Spanish Fruit and Vegetable Program materials in a Spanish class. Call or email the program for a supply.
- Search for this festival on the Internet – the Feast of Radishes (December 23, in Oaxaca, Mexico). Find a way to celebrate fruits and vegetables at your school.



## Language, Music and Theater Arts

- Ask your librarian or a bookstore about stories, riddles, poetry, and music about fruits, vegetables, farms, gardens, orchards, shopping, cooking, eating, physical activity, and taking a challenge.
- Name a fruit or vegetable for every letter of the alphabet.
- Sponsor a writing contest – essays, poetry, short stories or skits.
- Hold a fruit and vegetable spelling bee.
- Describe a tropical fruit to someone who has never tasted it. Convince them to try.
- Write a jingle for a fruit and veggie PSA (public service announcement). “Air” it as a school announcement.
- Develop a magic show that features fruits and vegetables instead of rabbits and doves.
- ▶ E-mail or call the Program for a copy of:
  - **Fun Websites for Kids**
  - **Fruit and Veggie Book List**
- ▶ Borrow a CD from the Lending Library (page 1):
  - **Groovin’ Foods Music CD**
  - **Smart Fruit and Veggie Songs Music CD**
  - **Veggie Power Music CD**



## Physical Activity

- **Beanbag Games** Use fruit and veggie beanbags in games.
  - **Team Names** Name teams for fruits and veggies that are fuzzy; shiny; purple; high in fiber; vitamin A or C; a cabbage-family vegetable.
  - **Imagination** Imitate a growing seed, an apple tree during a storm; a cherry tree being visited by birds; an ear of corn being picked, husked, boiled, and eaten!
  - **Produce Relay** Have players use a spoon to balance increasingly bigger fruits and veggies – a grape, an apricot, an orange and a potato.
  - **Fruit Basket Upset** Form a circle and sit on the floor. Have each student pick a fruit name. Ask for a volunteer to stand in the center. The child in the center calls the names of two or more fruits. The students with those names get up and run to exchange places before the caller gets their spot. The one without a spot is the new caller. If the caller says “Fruit Basket Upset,” everyone changes places.
  - **Beans, Beans, Corn** (Duck, Duck, Goose) Form a circle. Sit on the floor. “It” walks around the circle saying “beans, beans, beans,…” until s/he taps someone and says “corn.” Then the two players run in opposite directions, trying to get back to the empty space. Whoever does not get a space is the new “it.”
  - **The Talking Turnip** (Mother May I). Use active commands like, “The Talking Rutabaga says play tennis, jump rope, run in place, swim, tap your shoulders, eat a carrot, or plant a garden.”
  - **Raining on the Orchard** Form a circle. Leader stands in the center facing one person and rubs his/her hands together. As the leader slowly turns in place, the circle gradually joins in. Repeat with louder actions – snapping fingers, slapping thighs, stamping feet! Then, reverse steps until the storm ends.
- Dance to your favorite fruit and vegetable tunes! Borrow CD's from the Library (page 1).
- **Groovin' Foods Music CD**
  - **Smart Fruit and Veggie Songs Music CD**
  - **Veggie Power! Music CD**
- For more information on physical activity and why it's so important for children to be active, contact KidPower!, a program that encourages physical activity in children, [KidPower@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:KidPower@dhhs.state.nh.us).



## Political Science

Vote for your favorite fruit and vegetable. Learn that every vote counts – set up a fruit and vegetable ballot. Invite adults to participate. Dovetail this event with town meeting days, voting day, old home days. This makes a great media event – invite the press!



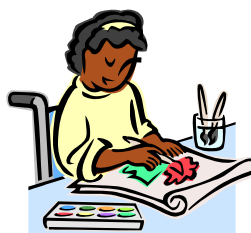
- Learn about write-in ballots.
  - Set up caucuses.
  - Establish “platforms” addressing color, flavor, vitamins A and C, fiber, and more.
- Call for a ballot and a copy of *It's an election year . . . run a produce campaign!*

## Science

- Plant a garden. Ask our office for a copy of *Resources for Promoting Fruits and Veggies*. Seed catalogs are a good source of photos and growing information. Plan a garden with produce rich in fiber, and vitamins A and C. Include a few cabbage-family vegetables. Or, plan a pizza garden!
- Take a field trip to a greenhouse or farm.
- Research the health benefits of eating produce.
- Name some produce items that grow on trees and in the ground. Which are roots, leaves, seedpods, seeds, stems, fruits?
- Learn how to turn red cabbage blue.
- Research the ripening process.



## Visual Arts



- Explore the portrayal of produce in art as a way to learn about different artists, styles, and media including fabric.
- Design fruit and veggie hats, placemats, magnets, and bulletin boards.
- Study the colors and textures of produce. Try to portray them with a drawing, painting or collage.

## How About a Challenge?

Challenge family, friends or another class to . . .

- Eat more fruits and vegetables and do 30 minutes of physical activity each day.
- Taste a new fruit or veggie daily for a week.
- Try new fruit or vegetable recipe.
- Learn the name of a new fruit or vegetable.

